

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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R 181712Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1466

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, PFOR, CI, US

SUBJECT: ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL

REF: STATE 276307

1. SUMMARY: WE ARE SURPRISED AT FATHER LEWERS' INNUENDO RE DEPT AND EMBASSY IN HIS LETTER TO CONGRESSMAN BRADEMAS, AND REQUEST CLARIFICATION AS TO ROLE HOLY CROSS ORDER WISHES US TO PLAY IN SEEKING RETURN OF ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL. END SUMMARY.

2. WE REGRET THAT FATHER LEWERS HAS SEEN FIT TO WRITE TO CONGRESSMAN BRADEMAS SUGGESTING THAT THE DEPT AND THE EMBASSY ARE LACKING IN INTEREST IN THE ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL PROBLEM AND REQUIRE "PRODDING."

3. WE HOPE DEPT'S RESPONSE TO BRADEMAS WILL INDICATE INTER ALIA THAT MEMBERS OF EMBASSY, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR, DCM, POLITICAL SECTION, AND USIS, HAVE SPENT COUNTLESS HOURS ON PROBLEM SINCE SCHOOL WAS INTERVENED BY GOC. DURING THIS ENTIRE PERIOD IT HAS BEEN EXPLICITLY UNDERSTOOD THAT HOLY CROSS ORDER DID NOT RPT NOT WISH USG FORMALLY TO INTERVENE IN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE ORDER AND OTHER CHURCH AUTHORITIES ON THE ONE HAND, AND GOC ON THE OTHER. AMBASSADOR HAS SEVERAL TIMES URGED GOC EDUCATION MINISTER ADMIRAL CASTRO AS WELL AS FOREIGN

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MINISTER TO TAKE STEPS LOOKING TOWARD RETURN OF SCHOOL, BUT HE HAS DONE

THIS ON INFORMAL BASIS IN ORDER NOT TO COMPLICATE
DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS.

4. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING CLARIFICATION
AS TO WHETHER FATHER LEWERS WANTS IN OR OUT OF THIS
PICTURE, PREFERABLY BEFORE VISIT WE UNDERSTAND HE WILL
BE MAKING TO SANTIAGO ABOUT CHRISTMAS TIME.

5. RELEVANT TO THE FOREGOING, AMBASSADOR DEC 16 RECEIVED
LETTER FROM FATHER HESBURGH DATED DEC 9 ENCLOSING COPY OF
DISCOURAGING CORRESPONDENCE IN WHICH GENERAL PINOCHET
TAKES AN EXTREMELY NEGATIVE LINE REGARDING RETURN OF
SCHOOL TO CONGREGATION; IN RESPONSE, FATHER HESBURGH
URGES THAT PAST DISAGREEMENTS BE SET ASIDE AND THE
SCHOOL BE RETURNED ON BASIS PROPOSED BY FATHER HESBURGH
LAST SUMMER, WITH REMINDER RE UNPLEASANT CONSEQUENCES
FOR CHILE IF THIS NOT DONE. HESBURGH ALSO SENT COPIES OF
CORRESPONDENCE TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS IN A
LETTER DATED DEC 11.

6. HESBURGH'S LETTER TO AMBASSADOR REQUESTS
LATTER TO BE SURE PINOCHET PERSONALLY REVIEWS THE
CORRESPONDENCE. WE ARE TAKING STEPS THROUGH
MILITARY CHANNELS TO DO THIS. HESBURGH ALSO
STATES THAT ANY PRESSURE AMBASSADOR CAN PUT ON
GOC TO GET THE SCHOOL RETURNED WILL BE APPRECIATED.

7. FOREGOING HIGHLIGHTS NEED FOR CLEAR UNDERSTANDING
WITH HOLY CROSS AS TO PRECISE ROLE OF DEPT AND EMBASSY.
ALTHOUGH WE BY NO MEANS SURE, OF SUCCESS, WE WOULD BE WILLING TO
MAKE A STRONG PITCH. THIS WOULD REQUIRE HOLY CROSS
TO REMAIN IN THE BACKGROUND WHILE NEGOTIATIONS WERE
ACTIVE.

8. PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED OF YOUR REPLY TO BRADEMAS
AND ANY CONTACTS WITH FATHER LEWERS.
POPPER

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